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Museum Welcomes United Nations' General Assembly Resolution on Holocaust Denial and Distortion

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Museum Press Kit

UNITED STATES HOLOCAUST MEMORIAL MUSEUM WELCOMES UNITED NATIONS' GENERAL ASSEMBLY RESOLUTION ON HOLOCAUST DENIAL AND DISTORTION

WASHINGTON, DC – The United States Holocaust Memorial Museum welcomes the United Nations General Assembly resolution calling on member states to counteract Holocaust denial and distortion, especially on social media.

“We applaud this global condemnation of Holocaust denial and distortion, which are dangerous forms of antisemitism,” says Museum Director Sara J. Bloomfield. “This is especially important as violent antisemitism is on the rise. History shows us that mass

communications and the propaganda they facilitate have the potential for good or ill. Social media can reach billions in seconds and enable communities of hate to develop. Hitler once said, ‘Propaganda is a truly terrible weapon in the hands of an expert.’ With social media, anyone can be an expert. The UN resolution is an important step, but addressing antisemitism will require efforts from governments, companies, organizations, and individuals worldwide, and we hope this resolution will spark further action.”

The resolution, sponsored by the State of Israel and adopted by consensus, references the definition of Holocaust denial and distortion established by the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance, which was developed with input from the Museum. The Museum’s report on Holocaust denial and distortion in Europe and related recommendations can be found [here](#).

A federally chartered, nonpartisan educational institution, the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum serves as America’s national memorial to the victims of the Holocaust and is dedicated to ensuring the permanence of Holocaust memory, understanding, and relevance. Through the power of Holocaust history, the Museum challenges leaders and individuals to think critically about their role in society and to confront antisemitism and other forms of hate, prevent genocide, and promote human dignity. For more information, visit ushmm.org.

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General Assembly

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Agenda item 16
Culture of peace

Albania, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, Bulgaria, Canada, Colombia, Costa Rica, Croatia, Cyprus, Czechia, Denmark, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Estonia, Fiji, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Guatemala, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Marshall Islands, Mexico, Monaco, Mongolia, Montenegro, Nauru, Netherlands, New Zealand, North Macedonia, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Romania, Rwanda, San Marino, Seychelles, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Sudan, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, Tuvalu, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Uruguay and Zambia: draft resolution

Holocaust denial

The General Assembly,

Reaffirming the purposes and principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, as well as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights,¹ which proclaims that everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth therein, without distinction of any kind, such as, *inter alia*, race, religion or other status, and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights,² which state that everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion,

Bearing in mind that the founding principle of the Charter of the United Nations, “to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war”, is testimony to the indelible link between the United Nations and the unique tragedy of the Second World War,

Recalling the preamble to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which states that disregard and contempt for human rights have resulted in barbarous acts which have outraged the conscience of mankind,

Recalling also that 2020 marked the seventy-fifth anniversary of the end of the Second World War, a war which brought untold sorrow to humankind, particularly in Europe, Asia, Africa, the Pacific and other parts of the world,

¹ Resolution 217 A (III).

² See resolution 2200 A (XXI), annex.



Recalling further the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide,³ which was adopted in order to avoid repetition of genocides such as those committed by the Nazi regime,

Recalling article 18 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and article 18 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, which state that everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion,

Reaffirming the positive role that the exercise of the right to freedom of opinion and expression and full respect for the freedom to seek, receive and impart information can play in strengthening democracy and combating religious intolerance, and reaffirming further that the exercise of the right to freedom of expression carries with it special duties and responsibilities and may therefore be subject to certain restrictions, but that these shall only be such as are provided by law and are necessary for respect of the rights or reputations of others, and for the protection of national security or of public order, or of public health or morals, and that all measures taken must be in full compliance with international human rights law, in accordance with article 19 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights,

Deeply concerned about the prevalence of impunity in some instances, and the lack of accountability in some cases, in addressing violence against persons on the basis of religion or belief in public and private spheres, and stressing the importance of making the necessary efforts to raise awareness to address the spread of hate speech against persons on the basis of religion or belief,

Reaffirming its resolution 60/7 of 1 November 2005, which underlines that remembrance of the Holocaust is a key component of the prevention of further acts of genocide, and recalling that ignoring the historical facts of those terrible events increases the risk that they will be repeated,

Reiterating the principles of international law recognized by the Charter of the Nürnberg Tribunal, and taking note with appreciation of their codification by the International Law Commission in 1950,

Reaffirming its resolution 61/255 of 26 January 2007 on Holocaust denial,

Noting that 27 January has been designated by the United Nations as the annual International Day of Commemoration in Memory of the Victims of the Holocaust,

Acknowledging the establishment by the Secretary-General of the programme of outreach on the subject of “the Holocaust and the United Nations” as well as the work of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, including on countering Holocaust distortion and denial,

Honouring the courage and dedication shown by the soldiers who liberated Nazi concentration and extermination camps, and those who fought against the Nazis, including in the resistance movements, as well as all those who resisted the Nazis, and who protected or sought to rescue those who were in danger,

Taking note of the reports of the Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance contained in documents A/HRC/26/50, A/75/329 and A/HRC/44/58 and the report of the Special Rapporteur on freedom of religion or belief contained in document A/74/358,

Recalling that 20 January 2022 will mark 80 years since the “Wannsee Conference”, at which the implementation of the so-called “Final Solution to the Jewish Question” was discussed and coordinated by officials of Nazi Germany,

³ Resolution 260 A (III), annex.

resulting in the systematic establishment of the Nazi death camps, ultimately resulting in war crimes and crimes against humanity,

Reaffirming that the Holocaust, which resulted in the murder of nearly 6 million Jews, 1.5 million of whom were children, comprising one third of the Jewish people, in addition to the killing of millions of members of other nationalities, minorities and other targeted groups and individuals, will forever be a warning to all people of the dangers of hatred, bigotry, racism and prejudice,

Noting that Holocaust denial refers to discourse and propaganda that deny the historical reality and the extent of the extermination of the Jews by the Nazis and their accomplices during the Second World War, known as the Holocaust or Shoah,

Noting also that Holocaust denial refers specifically to any attempt to claim that the Holocaust did not take place, and may include publicly denying or calling into doubt the use of principal mechanisms of destruction (such as gas chambers, mass shooting, starvation, and torture) or the intentionality of the genocide of the Jewish people,

Bearing in mind that Holocaust denial in its various forms is an expression of antisemitism,

Noting that distortion and/or denial of the Holocaust refers, *inter alia*, to:

- (a) Intentional efforts to excuse or minimize the impact of the Holocaust or its principal elements, including collaborators and allies of Nazi Germany,
- (b) Gross minimization of the number of the victims of the Holocaust in contradiction to reliable sources,
- (c) Attempts to blame the Jews for causing their own genocide,
- (d) Statements that cast the Holocaust as a positive historical event,
- (e) Attempts to blur the responsibility for the establishment of concentration and death camps devised and operated by Nazi Germany by putting blame on other nations or ethnic groups,

Emphasizing that States, regional organizations, national human rights institutions, civil society, non-governmental organizations, religious communities and the media play a crucial role in promoting tolerance and understanding, as well as fighting racism, negative stereotypes, hate speech and the deliberate spread of disinformation that may incite to discrimination, hostility or violence, and in the universal promotion and protection of human rights,

Noting with concern the growing prevalence of Holocaust denial or distortion through the use of information and communications technologies,

Noting the global and open nature of the Internet and the significant role of social media in spreading information, and their potential to play a positive role in the preservation of the memory of the Holocaust, promoting historically accurate Holocaust education and countering Holocaust denial and distortion,

Expressing concern about the spread of disinformation and misinformation, particularly on social media platforms, which can be designed and implemented so as to mislead, to spread racism, intolerance, xenophobia, negative stereotyping and stigmatization, and to violate and abuse human rights,

Taking note of the report of the Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance contained in document A/64/295 emphasizing the importance of history classes in teaching the events and human suffering which arose out of the adoption of ideologies such as

Nazism and Fascism, and also emphasizing that school classes and schoolbooks which are inclusive, representative, unbiased, aimed at reflecting with objectivity and accuracy the history of people belonging to minorities and the relations with neighbouring countries, well-trained teachers and human rights courses are essential to instil tolerance and respect,

1. *Rejects and condemns without any reservation any denial of the Holocaust as a historical event, either in full or in part;*
2. *Urges all Member States to reject without any reservation any denial or distortion of the Holocaust as a historical event, either in full or in part, or any activities to this end;*
3. *Commends those Member States which have actively engaged in preserving those sites that served as Nazi death camps, concentration camps, forced labour camps, killing sites and prisons during the Holocaust, as well as similar places operated by Nazi-allied regimes, their accomplices or auxiliaries;*
4. *Urges Member States to develop educational programmes that will inculcate future generations with the lessons of the Holocaust in order to help to prevent future acts of genocide, and in this context commends the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance;*
5. *Urges Member States and social media companies to take active measures to combat antisemitism and Holocaust denial or distortion by means of information and communications technologies and to facilitate reporting of such content;*
6. *Requests the United Nations outreach programme on the Holocaust as well as all relevant United Nations specialized agencies to continue to develop and implement programmes aimed at countering Holocaust denial and distortion, and to advance measures to mobilize civil society, and invites all relevant stakeholders, including States, parliaments, the private sector and academia to educate their societies truthfully about the facts of the Holocaust and the importance of its lessons as a countermeasure against Holocaust denial and distortion, in order to prevent future acts of genocide.*
